The History Of
Sethupathi Dynasty
Ramnad
Samasthanam
Sembinattu Maravar
Seperated by
N K BALA

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M.A. HISTORY - I YEAR

DKH11 - HISTORY OF TAMILNADU UPTO 1967
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SYLLABUS

Unit - I

Introduction : Influence of Geography and Topography on the History of Tamil Nadu - Sources of Tamil Nadu History - Races and Tribes - Pre-history of Tamil Nadu.
SangamPeriod : Chronology of the Sangam - Early Pandyas – Administration, Economy, Trade and Commerce - Society - Religion - Art and Architecture.

Unit - II

The Kalabhras - The Early Pallavas, Origin - First Pandyan Empire - Later PallavasMahendravarma and Narasimhavarman, Pallava's Administration, Society, Religion, Literature, Art and Architecture.
The CholaEmpire : The Imperial Cholas and the Chalukya Cholas, Administration, Society, Education and Literature.
Second PandyanEmpire : Political History, Administration, Social Life, Art and Architecture.

Unit - III

Madurai Sultanate - Tamil Nadu under Vijayanagar Ruler : Administration and Society, Economy, Trade and Commerce, Religion, Art and Architecture - Battle of Talikota 1565 - Kumarakampana's expedition to Tamil Nadu.
Nayakas of Madurai - ViswanathaNayak, MuthuVirappaNayak, TirumalaNayak, Mangammal, Meenakshi.
Nayakas of Tanjore :SevappaNayak, RaghunathaNayak, VijayaRaghavaNayak.
Nayak of Jingi : VaiyappaTubakiKrishnappa, Krishnappa I, Krishnappa II, Nayak Administration, Life of the people - Culture, Art and Architecture.
The Setupatis of Ramanathapuram - Marathas of Tanjore - Ekoji, Serfoji, Tukoji, Serfoji II, Sivaji III - The Europeans in Tamil Nadu.

Unit - IV

Tamil Nadu under the Nawabs of Arcot - The Carnatic Wars, Administration under the Nawabs - The Mysoreans in Tamil Nadu - The Poligari System - The South Indian Rebellion - The Vellore Mutini- The Land Revenue Administration and Famine Policy - Education under the Company - Growth of Language and Literature in 19th and 20th centuries - Organization of Judiciary - Self Respect Movement.

Unit - V

Tamil Nadu in Freedom Struggle - Tamil Nadu under Rajaji and Kamaraj - Growth of Education - Anti Hindi & Agitation.

40. SETUPATIS OF RAMNAD

The Maravas played a conspicuous role in the history of 17th and 18th Century Tamilaham. The Setupatis were Maravas who belonged to the territory to the east of Madurai, south of Tanjore and north of Tirunelvelly and bounded on the east by the sea. They were also known as 'Kallar' and they designated themselves Thevar (Tevar). They were war-like people, tempe ramentally disinclined to subjection to any authority; they had their hideouts in the many forests of their land which has always been infertile and dry. Their origin as a political power are shrouded in historical mist further confused by their interminable legends.

The Setupatis emerge into history during the reign of Muthu Krishnappa Nayaka.

(i) (1601-1609) He appointed Sadaikka Tevar as Udayan Setupati of Ramnad. Setupati means guardian of the Causeway to Ramesvaram. The Maravas considered it their privilege to protect the pilgrims going to Rameswarm. He humbled the Vanniyar and pacified the Polygars whose chief he became. Thus he became the first Setupati of the Nayak of Madurai. (ii) Kuttan Setupati:

His reign period lasted from 1622 to 1636. He continue the tradition established by his father. He was a true subordinate of the Nayak of Madurai.

Sadaikka II

He was the adopted son of Kuttan Setupati. He succeeded Kuttan Setupati after his death in 1636. For about three years, Sadaikka II ruled peacefully. Sadaikka II was also known as Dalavay Setupati. Hts position was challenged by Thambi, an illegitimate son of Kuttan. He was supported by the Nayak of Madurai as the Setupati was witholding tribute.

Thambi invaded Ramnad. We get a clear picture about the Marava civil war from the Ramappaiyan Ammanai. It was a terrible war. The Setupati was defeated and taken prisoner. Tambi was crowned but the popular sentiment was against his regime.

Once again Raghunatha Tevar and Narayana Tevar, nephews of Sadaikka were also opposed to Thambi. So Tirumalai Nayak ousted Thambi and restored Sadaikka. Thambi hatched a plot against the Setupati and killed him. The assassin himself died a loyal servant of the Nayak. He ably assisted Tirumalai Nayak and Muthu Veerappa II in their wars against Mysore.

Raghunatha Setupati alias Thirumalai Setupati

Raghunatha Setupati ruled one - third of the Setupati dominion from 1645 and the whole of the kingdom from 1655 to 1670. He may be considered to be the greatest among the Setupatis. During his period, the relationship between the Setupatis and Nayaks of Madurai became strained. Chokkanatha Nayak invaded Ramnad for the former had refused to cooperate during the Muhamrnadn invasion of Trichy. An army led by him easily overran Tirupattur, Pudukottai, Manamadurai and Kalayarkoil. The Maravas withdrew to the jungles and resorted to guerilla warfare. Chokkanatha returned ordering the army to render their submission. But they were a hard nut to crack. This army returned crest-fallen, in 1674 he was succeed by his nephew Surya Thevar.

Raghunatha Setupati was a great patron of literary men. He was a great builder of temples. Moreover he renovated many temples. In Spite of the many wars he waged, he found the resources and the time needed to promote the peaceful arts. Telugu language in addition to native Tamil was used in court records and official correspondence. Alagiya Chitrambala Kavirayar and Amirtha Kavirayar were among the Tamil poets patronised by him. Perhaps he is to be credited with the construction of the Second 'Prakara' of the Ramanathaswamy Temple on Ramesvaram. Thayumanavar, the famous mystic poet spent his last days in Ramnad during the reign of this prince.

Surya Tevar and Athana Tevar:

Tirumalai Setupati was succeeded by the elder of his two sons Surya Tevar and then by Athana Tevar. They reigned in succession but the reign periods of both of them together did not exceed one year. Both of them died one after another within a short period. After a few years of personal rule the Nayak appointed Raghunatha Tevar alias Kilavan Setupati, son of Surya Tevar through his fifth wife.

Raghunatha Setupati:

He ruled from 1671 to 1710 A.D. His nickname was Kilavan Setupati. He was a ruthless and cruel man; warlike and tolerant but in his own way competent. He stood with Chokkanatha Nayak in the days of difficulty and got the title 'Para Raja Kesari' (Lion to alien kings). He increased the defences of the Marava Kingdom and took stern measures against

rebels.

Kilavan Setupati founded the Tondaiman dynasty of Pudukkottai in 1711. Kilavan picked up a quarrel with Muthu Veerappa Nayak HI and turned rebellious, and so the Nayak sent an army against Ramnad which was defated by the Setupati in league with Tanjore.

In 1700 he receded the Marava country practically from subjection of Madurai. His anti-Madurai policy forced Manga-mmal-to despatch an army against Ramnad in 1702. It was routed by the Maravas and forced to return ignominously. Mangammal's difficulty with Aurangazeb gave Kilavan the opportunity to liberate Ramnad from the Nayak yoke. By 1706, Kilavan Setupati established the independent kingdom of the Marayas.

According to Prof. R.Sathianatha Iyer, "he was a man of remarkable ability who conducted the administration of the country with vigour and wisdom". He shifted the capital of the kingdom from Pugalur to Ramnad. He also ereated the Sivaganga Palayam and appointed Periya Wodaya Tevar as its governor. He was a bigot Hindu ruler. He was responsible for the execution of the Christian missionary worker Jonn de Britto. It was due to the large scale conversion of Marvas to Christianity by John de Britto. It is stated that at one time he converted nearly 8000 Maravas to Christianity.

Kilavan Setupati's services to the cause of Hinduism were many. He endowed a temple in Tiruvadanar with lands; he provided for the comfortable functioning of many mathas. He gave three villages to a temple near Kalaiyarkoil. He ordered the excavation of a large reservoir called the 'Mugavai Urani' and the construction of a dam across the Vaigai. He permitted the Dutch who had settled themselves on the eastern coast, to fish freely in the waters nearby for but a nominal fee. The Setupati at the age of 80 and after a reign of 40 years, passed away in 1710 A.D. His 47 wives committed self-immolotion on his funeral pyre. He left no heir to succeed him.

Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati:

He was in power from 1710 to 1720 A.D. He inherited a very bad economic condition of the country and had to face famine on one hand and floods on the other and the consequent hardships. He caused a lake called 'Raghunatha Samudram' to be excavated near Tanjore. He divided the country into a number of defence zones and improved also the civil administration.

The Polygars were disciplined and the Palayam system was reorganised. He built many forts. The important one was built at Kamudi. He ruled a vast territory between Tiruvarur in the north and Tirunelveli in the south. He was a devout Saivite who made many additions to the Ramanathasamy Temple at Rame-svaram.

Others:

After the death of Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati, Sundaresvara Tevar alias Tanda Tevar became the ruler of Ramnad. He was defeated by Anand Rao, General of the Tanjore armies and finally he was beheaded. Then Bhavani Sankara came to the throne in 1720 and ruled till 1729. During the time of Kattaya Tevar (1729-1735) the Marava country witnessed two invasions i.e, one from Tanjore under Tokkoji, the successor of Serfoji I and the other from the General Anand Rao. He was succeeded by his son Sivakumara Muthu Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati (1735-1746). His reign was peaceful and undisturbed by wars. He was succeeded by Rakka Tevar, a cousin of Kattaya Tevar in 1747. After him, Sella Tevar (Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati) became the ruler in 1748. His reign lasted upto 1761. In course of time the Maravas slowly drifted towards the Nawab. In 1761 Sella Teva died and left no son behind. His sister's son Muthuramalinga Setupati became the ruler in 1761. During his time, things threatened to go from bad to worse in Ramnad. In 1772 Ramnad came under the direct management of the Nawab of Arcot. In 1792 the Ramnad territories were ceded to the Brithish by a treaty; Col. Martinz occupied the Marava country. The company took its administration. In 1803 the Zamindari of Ramnad was transferred to MangalesVari Nachchi-yar. Thus the Ramnad kingdom was reduced to the status of a Zamindari.

Mangaleswari Nachchiyar became Zamindarini in 1803 and was in power till 1812. Her son Annasamy Tevar succeeded her inl812. He assumed the title Muthu Vijaya Raghunatha Setupati. After his death in 1820, Ramasamy Tevar claimed the Zamin during 1820 to 1830. From 1830 to 1847 it was put under the control of hs widow Parvadhavardhani Nachchiyar. Later it was brought under the crown in 1858. The manager Ponnusamy Tevar looked after its administration. He died in 1869. His son Pandithurai Tevar became the reputed founder of the Madurai Tamil Sangam. Muthuramalinga Setupati, Baskara Setupati, Rajarajeswara Muthuramalinga Setupati and. Shanmuga Rajeswara Naganatha Setupati took over the administration of Ramnad Zamin respectively. The last Setupati joined the congress party in 1949 and in that year the Zamindari right of Ramnad was abolished. He was minister

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पी० एम० तेवर P. M. THEVAR